R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 016 689 UD 003 622

THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL POLICY--SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN A NORTHERN CITY.

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PUB DATE 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.96 22P.

DESCRIPTORS- *URBAN SCHOOLS, *DEFACTO SEGREGATION, *RACIAL BALANCE, NEGROES, *COMMUNITY PROBLEMS, EDUCATIONAL POLICY, REZONING, DEMONSTRATIONS (CIVIL), BUS TRANSPORTATION, OPEN ENROLLMENT, STUDENT DISTRIBUTION, SLUM SCHOOLS, NORTHERN SCHOOLS, BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY, SCHOOL INTEGRATION, SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS,

A MEDIUM-SIZED NORTHERN CITY WITH A NEGRO POPULATION OF ABOUT SEVEN PERCENT WAS EMBROILED IN A DISPUTE ABOUT DE FACTO SCHOOL SEGREGATION WHICH WAS PRECIPITATED BY BOUNDARY LINE REVISIONS FOR AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. IMPELLED BY THE PRESSURES OF CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS, PLANS FOR RACIAL BALANCE HAD BEEN DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED--OPEN ENROLLMENT, BUSING, AND REASSIGNMENTS. A NEWLY CREATED COMMUNITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT BUT AMBIGUOUS ROLE IN THE CONTROVERSY IN THAT SOME PEOPLE FELT ITS FUNCTION WAS ADVISORY WHILE OTHERS SAW THE COMMITTEE AS A NEGOTIATOR AND/OR MEDIATOR. THE MOST DIVISIVE ISSUE OF THE CONTROVERSY WAS THE PLANNED TRANSFER OF WHITE PUPILS TO NEGRO SCHOOLS, WHICH CAUSED MOST WHITE FAMILIES TO AVOID INTEGRATION BY USING THE OPEN ENROLLMENT POLICY. THUS OPEN ENROLLMENT CAN EITHER IMPEDE OR ENCOURAGE INTEGRATION, WHICH WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED IF WHITE YOUNGSTERS ARE SENT TO INADEQUATE NEGRO SLUM SCHOOLS. SUCH A POLICY IS "EDUCATIONALLY UNSOUND" AND "POLITICALLY UNTENABLE." CLOSING SLUM SCHOOLS AND ABSORBING NEGROES INTO BETTER WHITE MIDDLE-CLASS SCHOOLS IS THE BEST WAY TO ACHIEVE INTEGRATION. SUCH EXTERNAL FACTORS AS THE STATE EDUCATION COMMISSIONER'S ORDER TO BALANCE THE SCHOOLS AND THE EMERGING CIVIL RIGHTS REVOLUTION SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT IN THE RESOLUTION OF THIS LOCAL CONFLICT. HOWEVER THE INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF MORE COMMUNITY ELEMENTS WOULD HAVE EASED THE SITUATION AND CREATED GREATER SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATION PLANS. (NH)

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The Evolution of Public Educational Policy: School Desegregation in a Northern City*

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Many northern states have had anti-discrimination laws for a long period of time. As a result, only a few cases of school segregation by law have been found in the North. De facto school segregation, on the other hand, exists in most northern communities which have large Negro populations. In part, this is the result of housing patterns and the use of the neighborhood school concept by many school systems.

The prevailing belief that little can be done with lasting effect until the barriers created by housing segregation have been surmounted has provided a major rationale for avoiding effective action. Opponents of this argument state that substandard education received in "ghetto" schools does not prepare the Negro child for employment in the modern world.

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*This is an expanded version of a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Chicago, Illinois, February, 1966, reporting one part of a broad study of the process and impact of school desegregation in a northern city. The project is being supported jointly by the National Institute of Mental Health and the U.S. Office of Education. Additional information is available from its Co-Director, Jerome Beker, Senior Research Associate, Syracuse University Youth Development Center, 926 S. Crouse Avenue, Syracuse, New York 13210.

**The authors wish to express their appreciation to all those who contributed to the data and are necessarily anonymous, and to Paul R. Holmes and Elizabeth J. Thompson for their suggestions on the organization, style, and content of this paper.

This, in turn, leads to poor-paying jobs (or no jobs at all), causing individuals to seek poor housing usually found in the "ghetto." Thus, the cycle of segregation repeats itself from generation to generation. To break it, public action must be taken in all three areas. Since education appears to be essential to higher achievement, however, action in this area must be taken now. These arguments are basically the ones advanced by the disputants in the community we examined.

The study described in the present paper focused on the evolution of an educational policy aimed at eliminating de facto school segregation. The problem, as we saw it, was to examine the process of community decision-making in the area of education with specific reference to school integration. In order to do this, we attempted the following: (1) to determine the sequence of action in the case being studied; (2) to understand the structure and dynamics of "democratic" action in Centerline; (3) to examine the functional relationships among the public, the Board of Education, and the professional administration of the school system; (4) to determine the relative contributions of particular individuals and groups to community decisions about education; (5) to determine the involvement or lack of involvement of various institutional systems within the community in regard to educational matters; and (6) to explore how local decisions about education and school integration were affected by extra-community influences. In the course of the study, relevant documents were examined (including minutes of public and confi-

dential meetings, research reports, policy statements, and newspaper reports), in-depth interviews were conducted with close to forty key participants in the critical events that occurred, and observations were made of meetings and public hearings.

Interview subjects included members of the Board of Education, school administrators, members of a special committee asked by the Mayor and the Board of Education to assist in alleviating the situation, individuals connected with the various protest groups, and other community figures. All potential interview subjects were assured that the material would be confidential. None declined to be interviewed. Written information was also solicited from these individuals, and we believe that our documentation is most complete. The interviews proved to be the most helpful source of information. They were either taped or recorded manually, apparently with equal success. Copies of the recorded interviews were returned to each subject for comment or revision. Ambiguous reports and interpretations were often clarified through the comparison of interview protocols with one another and with relevant documents. Despite strong ideological differences among the subjects, their reports of what had happened were notable in their consistency.

The findings are presented in three parts: (1) an introduction to the community, the school system, and the problem; (2) the description and analysis of events relating to the problem of de facto school segregation as they occurred during the three-year period from May, 1962,

to September, 1965; and (3) conclusions that may be drawn from this study with potential implications for other communities. Necessarily, this presentation is abbreviated; more detailed evidence and conclusions will be presented later.

THE COMMUNITY AND ITS SCHOOLS

"Centerline" (a pseudonym for the community studied) is a medium-sized, northern, urban community. It serves as a commercial and employment center for close to 500,000 people. Its economic base is in industry — a mixture of electronics, chemicals, drugs, and machinery. The city is about 150 years old. Its population is about 7 per cent Negro, concentrated primarily in the center of the city. As of 1962, when the problem of de facto school segregation in Centerline first came to public attention, the city had three schools with nonwhite populations well over 50 per cent. Schools adjacent to the Negro ghetto had nonwhite populations approaching 35 per cent.

A seven-member Board of Education is the repository of authority and responsibility for educational matters in the Centerline City School District, which serves approximately 30,000 children. The Board is composed of laymen nominated by party county conventions and elected at-large to serve staggered terms of four years each. The majority of Board members — and in some years, all of the Board members — come from the dominant political party, which is generally conservative in out-

look. Although the Board is officially responsible for educational policy and administration, financial planning responsibilities are shared with the city government, which must approve decisions in this area. The Board submits an annual budget (in recent years, over $20 million) to the city's Board of Estimate, composed of the Mayor, the President of the City Council, and the Mayor's financial advisor. The school system (under the direction of the Superintendent) administers the budget after it is approved. Supplemental fund requests must also be channeled through the Board of Estimate.

Election to the Board of Education has usually been a political "dead end" in Centerline; no Board Member is known to have aspired or advanced to any other elective office. Although the majority of Board Members tend to represent the same political party as the Mayor, there are sometimes educational policy clashes between the Mayor and the Board. For example, the Mayor's office must approve all property acquisitions. Recent disputes over site selection illustrate that not all is smooth in City-Board relations.

"Board Members legislate and make policy and the Superintendent administers Board policy" is the normative but not entirely accurate description of Board-staff relations, since the Board usually follows the Superintendent's lead. Thus, the Superintendent makes policy, indirectly as well as directly, through his power position and control over school

personnel. Board-staff relations must, of necessity, be close and harmonious if the system is to operate effectively. The Board, however, is primarily responsible to the public it theoretically serves. When the public comes into conflict with the school staff, the Board may be forced to decide in favor of one or the other.

THE SCHOOL INTEGRATION DISPUTE

The first recorded community concern with school segregation emerged during public debate over the revision of boundary lines of an elementary school on the periphery of the Negro "ghetto." In the Spring of 1962, the principal of Parker School (all names are pseudonyms) requested that the City School District's Research Department plan to alleviate potential overcrowding at Parker. This was a routine request, since principals in the Centerline system regularly communicate such problems directly to the Research Department, which then prepares pupil re-assignment proposals for consideration by the Superintendent and action by the Board. The end result of this request was not routine, however, as it sparked over three years of community discussion and debate over the problem of de facto school segregation.

Parker was located on the periphery of the city's Negro ghetto. In April, 1962, its pupil population was about 30 per cent nonwhite. The Research Department received the request and drew new boundary lines in its usual manner to redistribute pupil populations in accordance with

the neighborhood school concept. The proposals that emerged provoked strong parental opposition, however, since the students leaving Parker for another school would be predominantly white and those entering would be predominantly Negro.

The Board received the boundary revision plans from the Superintendent in May of 1962 and, as is routine, tabled them for public notification and study. Interested parents and others organized, and the staff proposals were challenged by four community groups, one of which had ties with the newly formed local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality. In July, 1962, their protest was successful, as the Board voted against the staff proposals. The Parker protest ended but, as this problem was solved, the charge of de facto school segregation was presented as a major community issue.

During the Parker protest, CORE became actively involved in opposing the proposed boundary revisions and also demanded that the Board study the problem of de facto school segregation and initiate action to solve it. The Board refused to admit that such a problem existed, and CORE "took to the streets," picketing the administrative offices of the Centerline City School District during parts of August and September, 1962. On the first day of school in September, the local chapter of NAACP and the civil rights committee of a local union joined CORE in staging a boycott of Horace Mann Elementary School, the school with the highest percentage—about 90 per cent—of nonwhite students. Nearly

900 of the 1,100 pupils stayed home. The school system's reaction was a mixture of surprise and outrage, but the protests led to the formation of an Education Committee to discuss the CORE charges. This Committee, composed of lay leaders and representatives of the disputing groups, met under the auspices of the State Commission for Human Rights.

The Committee debated, researched, and discussed the charge of de facto school segregation from October, 1962, until June, 1963, when it issued its findings and recommendations to the Board. Essentially, the Committee reported that school segregation did exist, although as the result of residential patterns rather than any conscious attempt by the Board to segregate white from nonwhite students. It called upon the Board to issue a policy statement in regard to improving racial balance in the Centerline public schools. At about the same time, a Special Message was issued by the State Commissioner of Education on the problem of racial imbalance. The Commissioner defined racial imbalance as a condition in which a given school's nonwhite student population exceeds 50 per cent. The Commissioner also called upon all local school boards and superintendents to examine their school systems, report to the Commissioner, and take immediate steps to solve their problems in this area.

Faced with both the Education Committee's Report and the Special Message from the Commissioner, the Board formulated and issued a Policy Statement which indicated that the Board would consider racial balance in future school boundary revisions. The Board also assured the Com-

mittee, or at least the members of the Committee believed they had assurance, that action on th Committee's recommendations would be taken for implementation in September of 1964. Working under this assumption, the Committee developed a public information program designed to help secure public support for the Board's expected action to promote school integration.

The period between the issuance of the Board's Policy Statement in July, 1963, and a joint meeting of the Board and the Committee held in February, 1964, was relatively uneventful, at least on the surface. That meeting, however, led to a crisis in Board-Committee relations. Members of the Committee thought that the Board's program for reducing racial imbalance in the system's schools would be announced at the meeting, but this did not occur. Instead, the Research Director requested specific direction as to what should be planned for September, 1964. Committee members proceeded to accuse the Board of bad faith. Board members denied this, stating that the Committee had misunderstood the Board's policy statement. Following this meeting, the Board directed the staff to prepare a plan for September, 1964. Such a plan was presented to the Board and, later, to the Committee and the public. It involved the reassignment of limited numbers of students of both races to schools where the other race was predominant, and it met some resistance but a greater measure of support.

About 450 youngsters were slated for re-assignment, about half of them white junior high school pupils whose former school building was scheduled for conversion to serve the elementary grades only. These pupils were assigned to the city's one overwhelmingly Negro junior high, which was expected to be approximately half Negro and half white as a result. About 75 Negroes were redistricted from this school to a predominantly white one. About sixty children were to be transported by bus from their overcrowded, predominantly Negro elementary school to attend grades one, two, and three at a predominantly white school where there was room for them. Finally, the closing of another school building led to the redistricting of about 100 children, most of them Negro, to a second predominantly white elementary school. The high school situation was hardly at issue, since the construction of a fourth high school building permitted the city to be divided into approximately racially balanced quadrants.

This first step on the elementary and junior high school levels was a small and cautious venture that, despite its symbolic importance, would do little to reduce the number of nonwhites attending the three predominantly Negro schools. Similarly, the influx of Negroes into white schools would be relatively slight. While the plan considered racial balance as a criterion for re-assignment and redistricting, it gave precedence to other criteria, such as overcrowding, and was presented to the public in that way.

When the plan went into effect in September, 1964, only about half of the scheduled pupil transfers actually took place. Most of the attrition occurred among the white youngsters assigned to the predominantly Negro junior high, a proposal that had stimulated the most community friction and opposition. In most cases, the re-assignment was avoided through the use of an "open school" option that had been initiated by the school system a year or two earlier, largely to relieve pressure from inner-city residents who wanted their children to attend the supposedly "better" and usually less crowded schools in more affluent neighborhoods. Under this option, schools not filled to capacity were announced as "open," and parents throughout the city were permitted to register their children on a first come, first served basis until capacities were reached. The open school program was perceived by school officials as a "safety valve" which would permit Negro parents actively concerned about integration to have their own children integrated without difficulty. In this situation, however, it operated to reduce integration, since it provided a "way out" for re-assigned white youngsters. There was much less attrition among Negro youngsters who were re-assigned in connection with the integration program.

Thus, while even this modest first approved plan was not fully implemented, it did provide some guidelines that were used in formulating plans for September, 1965. Perhaps the most obvious of these is reflected in the school system's subsequent refusal to consider any plan involving the assignment of white pupils to predominantly Negro schools.

The lack of strong repercussions when relatively small numbers of Negro youngsters entered predominantly white schools may have helped the Board and others concerned to accept the more ambitious program in this direction undertaken a year later.

During the Fall and Winter of 1964 and into early 1965, the Board and central administrative staff together, the Education Committee, and one of the protest groups developed separate plans for September, 1965. The plan eventually accepted by the Board was the one developed by its staff. Unlike the other two plans, which would have integrated predominantly Negro schools as well as predominantly white ones, the plan selected involved closing two of the three predominantly Negro schools and the busing of their pupils throughout the system. Over 1,450 pupils were to be distributed among twenty-two different schools -- over half the schools in the system -- compared to the four receiving schools involved in the 1964 plan. However, the largest predominantly Negro school was not affected by this plan and remains a Centerline problem. But with the relatively quiet implementation of the 1965 plan, the problem of racial imbalance at the junior high school level seems to have been eliminated, at least for the present. Consideration is currently being given to the remaining predominantly Negro elementary school. In addition, the percentages of nonwhite pupils are rising in other schools, particularly in those located on the periphery of the Negro "ghetto," and represent potential problems for the community.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems evident that the Board of Education, perhaps reflecting majority community sentiment, resisted change and moved only under outside pressure. Over a year passed between the first public awareness of the problem of de facto school segregation and the Board's formal acceptance of racial balance as a criterion for future assignment of pupils. During this period, pressure for the change came from three distinct sources: (1) the local protest groups led by CORE; (2) the Education Committee composed of representatives of the Board, the school district's administrative staff, the protest groups, and interested citizens; and (3) the State Education Department through the State Commissioner's Special Message on Racial Imbalance. But even by July, 1963, the Board was not fully committed to an active role in effecting school integration. Seven more months passed before the school staff presented a plan to alleviate a small measure of racial imbalance in the schools, and it was an additional seven months before this plan was implemented and some preliminary results known. Throughout this period, influential Board members still maintained that racial balance was a secondary criterion for boundary line revisions and student assignments. It was not until the second plan was presented to the public in March of 1965 that the Board committed itself to a policy of actively seeking school integration. What seems to have been amply demonstrated at each step of the process is that change could not

or would not have occurred in the absence of outside pressure; the Board reacted but did not generate its own momentum.

It seems equally clear that groups outside the established educational power structure, the "protest groups," were primarily responsible for initiating change. Although they did not create or implement the specific plans that emerged, it was they who brought the de facto segregation issue to the attention of the community. The picket line and the school boycott were their most dramatic tools. The protest groups have continued to prod the educational establishment into action and to pinpoint what they see as the shortcomings of those leaders responsible for educational policy, administration, and programs.

Once the protest groups had established the issue as a source of community concern and conflict, influential members of the community sought to restore equilibrium. In this effort, all parties involved turned to the Education Committee as an "interested third party" informally representing the community as a whole. It is apparent that this role is an important one to understand, and there remains much disagreement about it in Centerline. Some saw the Education Committee as purely an advisory body, while others felt that it should play a more active role by participating directly in negotiations and attempting to mediate. Until the Fall of 1964, the Committee appears to have served all these functions. Later, it became involved in formulating a detailed plan for school integration. To the extent that the Committee advocated its own plan, the "interested

third party" role may have been compromised. Whether the Committee will play a significant role in the future is in doubt. At the very least, it seems evident that such a group can serve effectively on a continuing basis only to the extent that its authority and tasks are clearly defined and accepted by all concerned.

Urban communities are not self-contained, autonomous units but are subject to outside influence and authority. Just as the local protests had disturbed one element of the political and social equilibrium in Centerline and led to efforts to re-establish it, the Civil Rights Revolution emerging nationally stimulated broader actions that mirrored and influenced the local situation throughout. One such action was the State Education Commissioner's Message on Racial Imbalance. This directive from the state capital seems to have influenced the Centerline situation by adding pressure on the Board to seek an accommidation with the protest groups and by helping to get the Board "off the hook" with more conservative elements in the community. In short, the Board could present itself as doing just what the state required. The state helped also by giving needed information and by providing the auspices for the Education Committee. Thus, extra-community influence and agents seem to have markedly aided the effort to harmonize conflicting community interests. This suggests that, despite the expressed feelings of many local community leaders to the contrary, outside resources may be both helpful and necessary in the successful solution of local problems.

Much of the indigenous local leadership in Centerline was not visibly involved in the situation, whether by choice or by default. Perhaps most significant was the almost complete silence of political office holders not directly involved and of party leaders, except for a minor role played by the Mayor's Office. Teachers' organizations, legal and other professional associations, labor unions, and business groups do not seem to have been publicly involved at this stage, with one exception: the Chamber of Commerce announced its support for the Board of Education's plan for the Fall of 1965. Religious organizations of the three major faiths publicly favored school integration, and many religious leaders actively supported efforts in this direction, but clergymen as a group or as individuals did not play a manifest role in resolving the community crisis. Local mass media seem to have been objective in reporting events as they developed, but did not give editorial leadership or support to integration plans; in fact, the evening newspaper voiced editorial criticism of anything labeled "school integration." It seems likely that the lack of involvement of so many elements of the community made the job harder for those who chose or were forced by their positions to take part. Even more important, negotiations were held and decisions were made without the broad participation that might have led to even better and more democratic decisions and greater community support.

By virtue of his position, of course, the Superintendent of Schools had a crucial role to play during the school integration dispute in Centerline. One superintendent resigned in July, 1962, for reasons apparently not re-

lated to the de facto segregation issue. An assistant superintendent who had been with the Centerline School System throughout his career served as Acting Superintendent until the appointment of the present superintendent a year later. The interim year coincided with the protests and the subsequent deliberations of the Education Committee. The Acting Superintendent was, of course, in a weak position as a "lame duck" official and lacked the power to make long-term commitments. It seems, in retrospect, that this vacuum may have slowed the decision process, primarily by depriving the community of the active leadership needed to present the program and to develop popular support for it.

The new Superintendent took office with much in his favor. Not only was he new to the system, but he had been Superintendent of Schools in a nearby community and was favorably known throughout the Centerline area. He was in a good position, therefore, to utilize his special influence as a new appointee without being vulnerable to "carpetbagger" allegations. It may also be hypothesized that, since he had changed positions several times to accept increasingly attractive opportunities, his primary loyalties when he came were to his profession rather than to the Centerline Public Schools. Of course, this may have modified as he became involved in the local situation and helped to develop and implement solutions. Whether because of the new Superintendent or because of a coincidental, natural acceleration of events, progress seemed to occur faster after his arrival.

The new Superintendent seems to have performed well as the "middle-man" between the Board and the staff and the Board and the Education Committee. He gained the trust of such diverse individuals as the protest leaders and members of the Board of Education and was able to establish and maintain communication between them. He was also generally successful in his efforts to interpret the work and decisions of the School System as a whole to the public. By contrast, the lack of communication during the interim period seems to have been at least partly responsible for the school boycott in the Fall of 1962. Despite obvious preparations and attempts by the protest groups to communicate using less drastic and dramatic means, the Board refused to recognize that a problem existed until 900 children stayed home from school on the first day of the semester. The resulting disruption of school administration and program, as well as the public exposure of the cleavage, might well have been avoided by effective communication and a willingness on the part of school officials to seek out, identify, and confront potential problem areas in advance.

The new Superintendent set out to do just this and, possibly as a result, overt community friction regarding de facto segregation was kept to a minimum. Dissent found its primary public expression at hearings where the Superintendent personally explained the plans as they developed. The greatest public opposition, which included many informal meetings and an unsuccessful law suit, centered around the planned transfer of white youngsters to the predominantly Negro junior high school. The open school

policy provided a safety valve which was used along with parochial school transfers and other means of evasion by most of the students affected. Nothing else approaching a public demonstration occurred, and the authors attribute this in large measure to the forthright leadership exerted by the Superintendent in support of the accommodation that had been reached among the Board, the Staff, the protest groups, and other leading citizens who were involved. Convinced of the need for a united posture to elicit public acceptance, he was able to obtain the active public involvement and support of virtually the entire Board and his administrative lieutenants in "selling" the new plans to the community. As has been mentioned above, this was done without the help of many of the city's leadership groups.

The experience in Centerline suggests, perhaps not surprisingly, that attempts to integrate by assigning white youngsters to schools located in Negro ghetto areas will tend to create greater opposition than will the reverse procedure. In this case, the difficulty was undoubtedly aggravated by the fact that the predominantly white school scheduled for closing served a closely-knit, ethnically homogeneous, working class population — probably the kind of group most frightened by racial integration. As has been noted above, most of the families involved were able to avoid integration by using the open school policy that had been instituted earlier in an effort to promote it. Thus, the open school policy as a "safety valve" can work both ways — to inhibit integration as well as to encourage it. Perhaps this is analogous to the "flight" to the suburbs and to private schools occurring

in many of our cities, often negating integration efforts and presenting an even greater challenge to efforts to move toward a racially integrated society.

In any case, most slum schools seem to be doing an inadequate job at best, and their staffs and pupils alike seem to be increasingly demoralized. This suggests the possibility that such schools might best be closed and their pupils and teachers dispersed. If achieving integration increased the number of poorly educated youngsters in our cities, this would be a hollow victory indeed. We would hypothesize, therefore, that integrating by assigning white youngsters to schools in the Negro ghetto is educationally unsound as well as apparently politically untenable.

The authors are aware of the compensatory education programs that have been instituted in many slum schools in an effort to upgrade educational services. One such program has been watched closely since its implementation in Centerline. A detailed analysis of this program is beyond the scope of the present paper, but there seems to be no evidence that it resulted in significantly more effective education in the schools involved. While there may be no short run alternative to such palliatives in large cities, this is not the case in Centerline. More to the point, these programs may retard integration by providing an "excuse" -- in effect, the "separate but equal" rationale no longer accepted by the courts. In addition, compensatory programs may create new sub-bureaucracies with a vested interest in continued <u>de facto</u> segregation by race or by social class. There does seem

to be evidence that the officials of the compensatory program in Centerline worked against integration and, even in public statements, favored the old status quo. Their expressed rationale was the same as that used by many white parents in opposing integration—concern for Negro youngsters who would not be "ready" to confront a new social group holding different standards of behavior and academic achievement—although they did become involved in planning for the change once its direction was clear.

This argument contains a germ of truth, enough to make it attractive to those seeking excuses and delays. Slum youngsters may not be "ready" to attend higher achieving, "middle class" schools, but it seems likely that they will never be ready until they make the confrontation. What is needed is special help—a wide spectrum of compensatory services—for school personnel and youngsters alike that will enable the newcomers better to cope with and succeed in their new setting. The Centerline experience showed that, when such services were adequate, the transferred pupils had less difficulty making the necessary adjustments. Even those middle-class white citizens who are genuinely concerned that Negro children will be hurt in this process may be victims of their own projection. Indeed, many whites might not succeed if the tables were turned, since they have had relatively little experience adapting to the standards, values, and demands of populations other than their own. The Negro child, on the other hand, has had to learn to do so. If he can exercise this ability while firmly establishing his personal integrity in predominantly middle-class schools, our entire

society will be the richer. The political solution — desegregation — is, of course, only half the battle. Real integration will require increasing positive efforts within the schools to establish a climate of interpersonal respect and to meet the varying developmental needs of all youngsters involved.

SUMMARY

The present paper is an examination of the evolution and implementation of an educational policy directed toward the elimination of de facto segregation in the public school system of a medium-sized, urban community. An attempt has been made not only to show the chronological unfolding of events, but also to analyze the process as an illustration of our democratic institutions at work to harmonize conflicting community interests. The dynamics of group and individual involvement have been explored, although necessarily in less detail than will appear in the complete report, along with the pressures in support of and in opposition to the emerging changes. It is hoped that the conclusions drawn will be helpful to other communities facing similar or related situations.